

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the Office Action mailed on October 13, 2005. Reexamination in light of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 are currently pending in this application, with claims 1 and 4 being independent.

No new matter has been added.

Election/Restrictions

The Office Action of July 6, 2005 includes a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. §121 and 35 U.S.C. §372. An election with traverse of that restriction requirement is found within the Request for Reconsideration of Restriction Requirement under 37 C.F.R. §1.143 filed on August 2, 2005. Paragraph 1 of the Office Action of October 13, 2005 includes an indication that the restriction requirement has been made FINAL.

Accordingly, a Petition Under 37 C.F.R. §1.144 requesting review of the restriction requirement made the Office Action of July 6, 2005 is provided along with this Amendment.

Timely review and consideration of the Petition along with the rejoinder of the allegedly distinct invention is respectfully requested.

Drawing objections

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action contends that reference character "1s" is not mentioned in the description.

In response to this contention, paragraph [0022] of the specification as originally filed provides that:

The annular shell 4 has two side walls radially inward which are formed as leg portions 7, and each elastic ring 5 is attached to the radially inner side of each leg portion. The elastic rings 5 are fittingly engaged with right and left rim seats 1s to support the annular shell 4, thereby not only mitigating vibrations of and impacts upon the annular shell 4 from a punctured tire, but also preventing slipping relative to the rim seats 1s. The elastic rings stably support the annular shell 4. The elastic rings 5 are formed so that the inner diameter thereof is in the approximately same size as the inner diameter of the beads of the pneumatic tire 2.

Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action contends that reference character "2C" is not mentioned in the description.

In response to this contention, while not conceding the propriety of this objection and in order to advance the prosecution of the above-identified application, paragraph [0024] of the specification has been amended as requested.

Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Specification objections

Paragraph 3 of the Office Action includes an objection to the specification

In response to this contention, while not conceding the propriety of this objection and in order to advance the prosecution of the above-identified application, paragraph [0017] of the specification has been amended as requested.

Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claim objections

Paragraphs 4-5 of the Office Action include an objection to the claims

In response to this contention, while not conceding the propriety of this objection and in order to advance the prosecution of the above-identified application, the claims have been amended as requested.

Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Paragraph 7 of the Office Action includes a rejection of claim 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

This rejection is traversed at least for the following reasons.

While not conceding the propriety of this rejection and in order to advance the prosecution of the above-identified application, the claims have been amended.

Withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Paragraph 9 of the Office Action includes a rejection of claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Japanese Application Publication No. 10-297226 to Glinz et al. (Glinz) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,685,927 to Hammond et al. (Hammond).

This rejection is traversed at least for the following reasons.

Glinz - Glinz arguably teaches the presence of an annular body 2 having curved parts 5, 6 (Glinz at Figure 3, and Abstract). However, the Office Action admits that Glinz fails to disclose, teach, or suggest one or more circumferential grooves extending in a circumferential direction of the tire (Office Action at page 5).

Moreover, Glinz does not show anything more than a tire/wheel assembly incorporating a run-flat support member comprising an annular shell and elastic rings in the cavity of a pneumatic tire fitted on a rim, and it contains no disclosure nor suggestion concerning the applicant's claimed relative arrangement of the circumferential groove on the tread surface and the apical line of the support surface of the run-flat support member or the two edges of the support surface of the run-flat insert member.

Accordingly, Glinz et al. cannot be expected to bring about the advantageous result according to the applicant's claimed invention that the occurrence can be suppressed of the circumferential groove undergoing a damage or destruction caused by the run-flat support member or the run-flat insert member supporting the tire, during run-flat operation, whereby an improvement can be attained in or relating to run-flat durability.

Thus, not all features are found within Glinz.

Hammond - The Office Action provides Hammond for the features that are admittedly absent from within Glinz.

Hammond arguably teaches tire which is enabled to be run flat by a rubber reinforcing member having a crescent shape in section and arranged in each sidewall of the tire, and not such a run-flat tire as having a run-flat support member or a run-flat insert member arranged in its cavity. In addition, Hammond arguably teaches the presence of a channel 90 (Hammond at Figures 2, 4, 4A, 4B, 5A).

While Hammond arguably teaches a circumferential groove formed on the tread surface, it contains neither disclosure nor suggestion of the applicant's claimed relative arrangement of the circumferential groove and the run-flat support member or the run-flat insert member.

Thus, Hammond cannot be expected to bring about the advantageous result according to the applicant's claimed invention that the occurrence can be suppressed of the circumferential groove undergoing a damage or destruction caused by the run-flat support member or the run-flat insert member supporting the tire, during run-flat operation, whereby an improvement can be attained in or relating to run-flat durability.

Moreover, Hammond fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a run-flat support member disposed in the hollow space of the pneumatic tire as in claim 1.

Hammond also fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a run-flat insert member disposed in the hollow space of the pneumatic tire as in claim 4.

Without the benefit of hindsight, the Office Action fails to show why the skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Glinz using the groove 90 of Hammond in the manner that an *apical line or apical face* of the convexly curved surface portion is offset in a direction of a center axis of rotation of the wheel so as not to be located in a position corresponding to the *circumferential groove* 90 of Hammond when viewed from a radial direction of the wheel.

Without the benefit of hindsight, the Office Action additionally fails to show why the skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Glinz using the groove 90 of Hammond in the manner that the *two edges of the annular support surface* are offset in a direction of a center axis of rotation of the wheel so as not to be located in a position corresponding to the *circumferential groove* 90 of Hammond when viewed from a radial direction of the wheel.

Instead, Hammond arguably teaches that a channel 90 can be radially located directly above the third bead core 37 (Hammond at Figure 2, column 12, lines 62-63). Hammond teaches that this tread bead core 37 alternatively can be made of any number of materials or cross-sectional shapes however the resultant bead core 37 must, when encapsulated in the rubber, exhibit a hoop strength sufficient to support several hundred pounds of dynamic load without collapsing (Hammond at column 9, lines 35-41). In this regard, however, when the tire is operated in the uninflated state the sidewall portions and the bead core 37 must support the entire load (Hammond at column 10, lines 23-25).

As a result, Glinz and Hammond, either individually or as a whole, fail to disclose, teach, or suggest all claimed features.

Withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are allowable, and the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and remarks is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone Brian K. Dutton, Reg. No. 47,255, at 202-955-8753.

If any fee is required or any overpayment made, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee or credit the overpayment to Deposit Account # 18-0013.

Dated: January 13, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By  

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